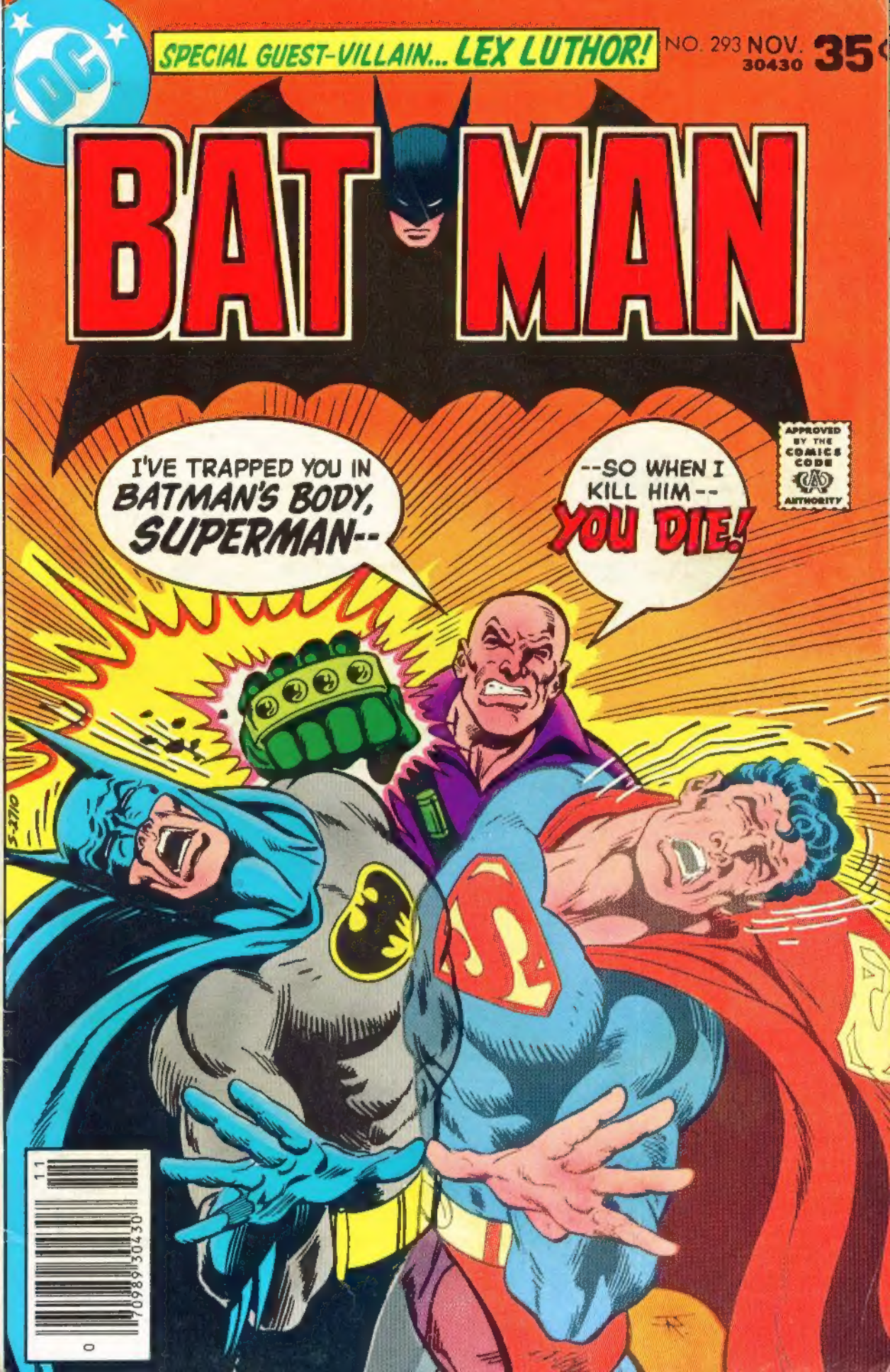
SPECIAL GUEST-VILLAIN... LEX LUTHOR!
NO. 293 NOV.
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35¢
BAT MAN
I'VE TRAPPED YOU IN BATMAN'S BODY, SUPERMAN--
--SO WHEN I KILL HIM-- YOU DIE!
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SUTTON

ORPHANED AS A CHILD WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE KILLED BEFORE HIS EYES, BRUCE WAYNE TRAINED HIMSELF TO WAGE RELENTLESS WAR AGAINST CRIME AS THE DREAD AVENGER OF THE NIGHT...
THE BATMAN
CREATED BY BOB KANE
THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO KILL THE BATMAN! DOMINATE HIS MIND -- AND DESTROY HIM FROM WITHIN!
NOT ALL QUESTIONS HAVE ANSWERS -- AND WHO KILLED THE BATMAN REMAINS ONE OF THEM! NOT ALL CRIMES ARE SOLVED -- AND THE MURDER OF THE CAPED CRUSADER STILL DEFIES RESOLUTION! BUT NOW COMES A MIGHTY AND MALEVOLENT MONARCH OF CRIMINAL SCIENCE -- WITH ALL THE ANSWERS -- IN...
"THE TESTIMONY OF LUTHOR!"
SPECIAL SURPRISE WITNESS--
SUPERMAN
STORY: DAVID V. REED
ART: JOHN CALNAN AND TEX BLAISDELL
COLOR: JERRY SERPE
LETTERING: BEN ODA

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THE *SUPREME COURT OF CRIME* MEETS AGAIN... NO CLOSER TO SOLVING THE SENSATIONAL MYSTERY THAT HAS THE UNDERWORLD IN TURMOIL! CONVOKED TO PROBE AND ADJUDGE THE NUMEROUS CLAIMS FOR THE GUILT AND GLORY OF *THE BATMAN'S* MURDER, IT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN *SESSION THREE*...

GATHERED AT A SECRET COUNTRY ESTATE TO ATTEND THESE EXTRAORDINARY TRIALS, THE RANKING NOBLES OF OUTLAWRY AWAIT THE GAVEL IN A HIGHLY CHARGED ATMOSPHERE...

SO FAR, THE INFAMOUS *CATWOMAN* AND *RIDDLER* HAVE BEEN EXPOSED AND DEVASTATED BY UNANIMOUS VERDICTS OF *NOT GUILTY*...

...LARGELY DUE TO THE BRILLIANT PERFORMANCE OF THE *PROSECUTOR--HARVEY DENT*, EX-D.A.--THE MALEVOLENT *TWO-FACE*--A SCARRED AND TWISTED CRIMINAL MASTER...AS HEARTLESS AS HE IS LAWLESS...

MAGNIFICENT JOB YOU'RE DOING, SIR.! I DOFF MY HAT TO YOU!

ENTER THE PRESIDING JUSTICE, *RĀ'S AL GHŪL*, DIABOLICAL HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIME-COMBINE CALLED *DEMON*...

MR. PROSECUTOR, CALL THE NEXT WITNESS.!

THE JURORS--*THE MAD HATTER, THE SPOOK, POISON IVY, SCARECROW, SIGNALMAN, AND MR. FREEZE*--ALL CELEBRATED AND CERTIFIED FELONS.!

LEX LUTHOR--TAKE THE *STAND!*

WHAT A GET-UP.!

HE ALWAYS HAD DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR.!

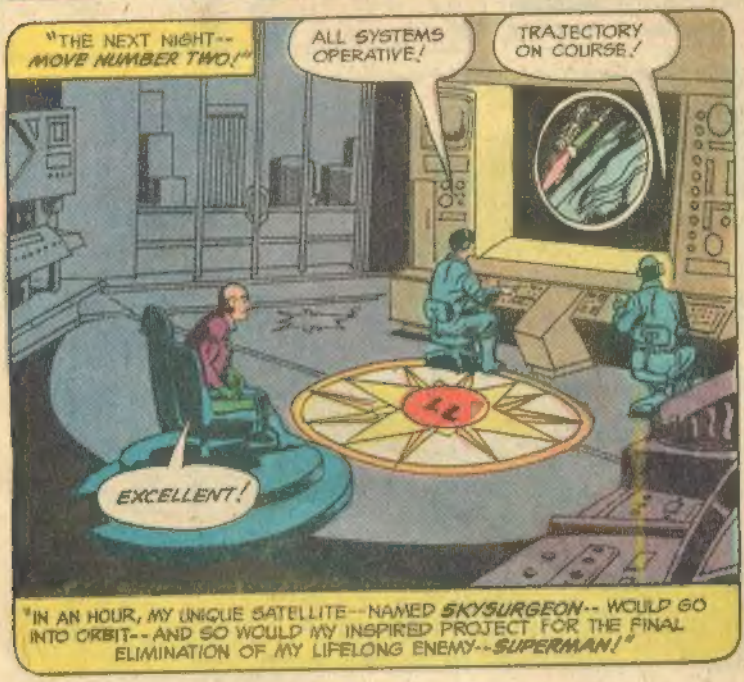
CLAD IN SPLENDOROUS NEW RAIMENT, THE *SINISTER SULTAN OF SCIENCE* MAKES A DRAMATIC ENTRANCE.!

I HAVE AN OPENING STATEMENT: HAD THE WORTHY PROSECUTOR TAKEN MY SUGGESTION TO HEAR ME FIRST, THESE TRIALS WOULD BE OVER BY NOW!
INSTEAD, HE HAS CHOSEN TO STAGE A REVOLVING CIRCUS--WASTING EVERYBODY'S TIME--MOST ESPECIALLY MINE!

VERY WELL, YOU'VE HAD YOUR SAY! WE AWAIT YOUR EXALTED MAJESTY'S TESTIMONY WITH BATED BREATH! TELL US--
WHERE WERE YOU ON THE NIGHT BATMAN WAS KILLED?
RECENTLY, A WELL-PUBLICIZED EVENT TOOK PLACE IN METROPOLIS...

"IT RATED HEADLINES--AND GOT THEM!"
DAILY PLANET
A SUPER OFFER FOR SUPERMAN!
TIMES
ANONYMOUS DONOR TO GIVE $1,000,000 FOR ONE HOUR OF SUPERMAN'S TIME!
NEWARK
METROPOLIS POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE TO BENEFIT
"ALL SUPERMAN HAD TO DO WAS ADDRESS THE P.A.L. ON THE SUBJECT 'PRESERVING OUR ENVIRONMENT'--NO STRINGS ATTACHED! HE HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ACCEPT..."

"...AS HE DID NEXT DAY ON WGBS-TV, IN AN INTERVIEW WITH LOIS LANE..."
WOULD YOU SAY, SUPERMAN, IT WAS AN OFFER YOU COULDN'T REFUSE?
ABSOLUTELY! ENVIRONMENT AND THE P.A.L. ARE TWO OF MY FAVORITE CAUSES!
"AND THAT ACCOMPLISHED MY FIRST MOVE!"


"THE NEXT NIGHT--MOVE NUMBER TWO!"
ALL SYSTEMS OPERATIVE!
TRAJECTORY ON COURSE!
EXCELLENT!
"IN AN HOUR, MY UNIQUE SATELLITE--NAMED SKYSURGEON--WOULD GO INTO ORBIT--AND SO WOULD MY INSPIRED PROJECT FOR THE FINAL ELIMINATION OF MY LIFELONG ENEMY--SUPERMAN!"

MR. PROSECUTOR, AREN'T YOU LETTING THE WITNESS WANDER RATHER FAR AFIELD? WE ARE CONCERNED WITH THE BATMAN! WHAT IS ALL THIS ABOUT SUPERMAN?
YOUR HONOR, IT'S ALL RELEVANT TO THE CLAIM LUTHOR SENT THE COURT!
CONTINUE, LUTHOR!
3

"AS I WAS ABOUT TO SAY -- WITH MY SATELLITE IN ORBIT, I PROCEEDED TO GOTHAM CITY FOR THE CAPER THAT WOULD SERVE TO TRIGGER MY PLAN..."

"--A FAKED ATTEMPT TO STEAL THE CROWN OF CHARLEMAGNE!"

"DATING FROM 800 A.D. ... WHEN CHARLEMAGNE BECAME EMPEROR OF THE WEST... IT WAS THE PRICELESS CENTERPIECE OF AN EXHIBITION AT THE GOTHAM MUSEUM OF ART..."

SPECIAL EXHIBITI
ANCIENT ART
CREATED FOR ROYALTY

"ANY SIGN OF TROUBLE THERE WAS BOUND TO BRING THE BATMAN!"

"LATER ON, IF AND WHEN I WANTED THAT CROWN -- I'D COME AND TAKE IT... AND NO POWER ON EARTH WOULD BE ABLE TO STOP ME!"

"BUT FOR NOW, IT WAS MERELY BAIT FOR A PHONY CAPER!"

"...AND AT EXACTLY 9:17, THE BATMAN MUST BE INSIDE THIS CIRCLE -- FACING DUE NORTH -- WITH HIS HEAD TILTED UPWARDS!"

"I'LL TAKE CARE OF THAT LAST DETAIL PERSONALLY!"

N
W
S

"TWO NIGHTS LATER... OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM..."

"IT'S 9:11 -- LET'S GO!"

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

"THERE WAS NOTHING FANCY OR SUBTLE ABOUT THE ATTACK--"
"--JUST A POLICE SERGEANT PRESENTING HIMSELF AT THE DOOR..."
"AND WHEN IT OPENED--"
REACH!
"INSTANTLY AN ALARM WENT OFF--AND THE DOOR LEADING TO THE EXHIBITION HALL CLANGED SHUT--JUST AS EXPECTED!"
BRONG BRONG BRONG
GET TO WORK ON THE DOOR!
"WHILE MY BOXMAN PLANTED A PLASTIC JAM SHOT--"
"--I HID AND GOT READY FOR THE BATMAN..."
"THE DOOR WAS REINFORCED STEEL--"
BOOOM
"--IT BUCKLED... BUT HELD!"
TRY IT AGAIN--WITH A BIGGER CHARGE!
"THEN, RIGHT ON SCHEDULE..."
ONE SHOT TO A CUSTOMER!
5

"THERE WAS A MINUTE AND TEN SECONDS TO GO..."
"WOULD MY MEN LAST THAT LONG?"
"IT WAS ROUGH ON THEM--"
SWISH
"FIGHTING THE BATMAN WAS BAD ENOUGH--"
"BUT THEY HAD TO DO IT WHILE WATCHING THE CLOCK--"
"AND WITHOUT TRYING FOR SERIOUS INJURY!"
"I WANTED THAT BODY INTACT!"
SPECIAL EXHIBITION
"WITH FIVE SECONDS LEFT-- THE BATMAN WAS CORRECTLY POSITIONED--IN THE CIRCLE OF DOOM!"
6

"SUDDENLY--SIMULTANEOUSLY--MY MEN HAD SPUN AROUND HIM--BRINGING HIM TO FACE *NORTH!*..."

"MY MINI-FLARE-MORTAR MADE NO SOUND AS I FIRED--"

"AND--PRECISELY AT *9:17*..."

"*I HAD HIM!*"

"THE REACTION WAS *INSTANTANEOUS!* HE STOPPED DEAD IN HIS TRACKS... UTTERLY BEWILDERED--"

"--HIS EXPRESSION MOUNTING FROM *FRIGHT* TO *PANIC!*"

"NEXT MOMENT--"

HE'S LAMMING OUT!

LET HIM RUN! HE'LL HAVE TO STOP SOMEWHERE--TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND!

LEX LUTHOR PAUSES... LOOKS AROUND THE CROWDED CHAMBER--

I SEE SKEPTICISM ON YOUR FACES! YOU CAN'T BELIEVE *THE BATMAN* RAN AWAY--?

BUT HE DID!--BECAUSE HE WAS NO LONGER THE BATMAN!

"WITHOUT GOING INTO TECHNOLOGY FAR BEYOND YOUR COMPREHENSION--INSIDE MY ORBITING SATELLITE *SKY-SURGEON* THERE ARE TWIN ACTINOID *MASER** RAYS..."

"...DESIGNED TO PERFORM AN ASTONISHING SURGICAL TRANSFERENCE--RAYS DIRECTED TO THE BRAIN THROUGH THE *PUPILS* OF THE *EYES!*"

**M*(ICROWAVE) A(MPLIFICATION BY) S(TIMULATED) E(MISSION OF) R(ADIATION)!--D.V.R.

"AT THE PREDETERMINED INSTANT --9:17--BOTH RAYS FLASHED DOWN TO THEIR TARGETS--*MILES APART!*"

"IN *GOTHAM CITY*, ONE RAY *ERASED THE BATMAN'S MIND* AND *CONSCIOUSNESS* AS ONE WOULD WIPE OUT A TAPE-RECORDING!.."

"THE SECOND RAY KNIFED DOWN TO *METROPOLIS* AND *SUPERMAN*... WHO--THANKS TO MY MILLION-DOLLAR BAIT OFFER--WAS ADDRESSING THE *P.A.L.*..."

"...STANDING IN THE CENTER OF MY OTHER PRE-ARRANGED TARGET AREA--WHEN, AT *9:17*..."

"...A SYNCHRONIZED TIMING-DEVICE LAUNCHED ANOTHER FLARE--TO PREPARE *SUPERMAN* FOR *SURGERY!*"

"AND HE, TOO, REACTED INVOLUNTARILY--RAISING HIS HEAD--TO MEET THE RAY PERFECTLY!"

"THE NEWSPAPERS REPORTED WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT MOMENT..."

CENTS PUBLISHED

SUPERMAN AILING! FAILS TO FINISH ADDRESS FOR P.A.L.

"NOTHING SERIOUS," DOCTOR SAYS

"BUT THEY WERE UNWITTING TOOLS OF A *HUSHUP*--A HUSHUP, I MAY ADD, THAT WILL END WHEN I RETURN TO *METROPOLIS!*"

"BUT WHAT *REALLY* OCCURRED ON THAT STAGE IS *THIS*--

HE LOOKS *DEAD!*

NO, HE'S BREATHING... JUST BARELY! GET A DOCTOR--*QUICK!*

"THE INDESTRUCTIBLE BODY OF SUPERMAN HAD BECOME A MONSTROUS EMPTY HULK--A BODY UNAWARE OF ITS EXISTENCE!"

INSTEAD, THAT *SELF-AWARENESS*--WHICH IS AT THE VERY CORE OF *EXISTENCE*--HAD BEEN *TRANSFERRED* TO *THE BATMAN*--REPLACING THE IDENTITY THAT HAD BEEN *ERASED!*

I HAD *SUPERMAN'S* IDENTITY--HIS UNIQUE *PERSONA*--TRAPPED IN THE BODY OF *THE BATMAN!*

"A *VULNERABLE* BODY--NOT THE *KRYPTONIAN* ONE BEYOND MY ABILITY TO DESTROY--BUT A BODY THAT WOULD BE THE VEHICLE OF MY REVENGE!"

"...A BODY THAT COULD NOT MEET THE INBORN DEMANDS OF ITS *BRAIN!*"

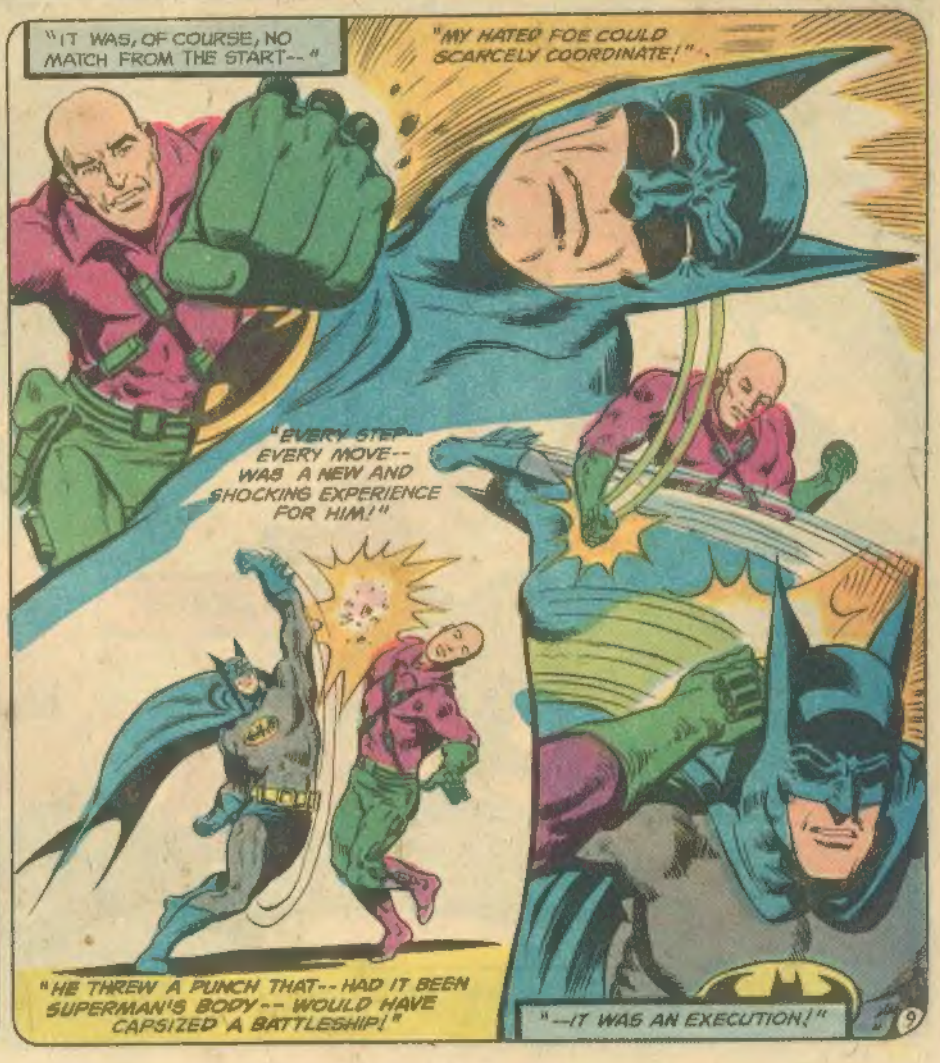
"A BODY BETRAYED BY *INSTINCT*--THAT TRIED TO HURL ITSELF INTO SPACE..."

"AND LEAPED TEN FEET--LOOKING LIKE A KANGAROO!"

CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

"WE NABBED HIM BEFORE HE COULD DAMAGE HIMSELF IN FUTILE ATTEMPTS TO DO THINGS THAT WERE NOW PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM--"
"--WITH A STEEL NET THAT SUPERMAN COULD HAVE EASILY CRUMBLED TO FINE POWDER!"

"THE SITE OF OUR FINAL ENCOUNTER WAS AN EMPTY CONCRETE BUNKER-- FOUR WALLS, INSIDE WHICH MY MORTAL ENEMY WAS WAITING!"
NO OTHER WEAPONS, LUTHOR-- JUST YOUR PAIN-INDUCING GLOVES?
NO! THIS I DO WITH MY HANDS!


"IT WAS, OF COURSE, NO MATCH FROM THE START--"
"MY HATED FOE COULD SCARCELY COORDINATE!"
"EVERY STEP-- EVERY MOVE-- WAS A NEW AND SHOCKING EXPERIENCE FOR HIM!"
"HE THREW A PUNCH THAT-- HAD IT BEEN SUPERMAN'S BODY-- WOULD HAVE CAPSIZED A BATTLESHIP!"
"--IT WAS AN EXECUTION!"

"WHAT THE BATMAN'S BODY COULD DELIVER--I COULD TAKE!"
"BUT MY BLOWS WERE LETHAL-"
WHUMP
WOK
WHOM
"--DEATH!"
"THE BODY OF THE BATMAN WAS LIFELESS.. BUT IT WAS SUPERMAN I HAD KILLED!"

"WITHIN THE HOUR, I SEALED THE BODY IN A CAPSULE, PLACED IT ABOARD A ROCKET AND SHOT IT INTO THE STRATOSPHERE--"
"--WHERE IT WILL SPEED IN TANDEM WITH MY SATELLITE TO REMAIN IN PERPETUAL ORBIT AS A COFFIN IN SPACE!"
WITH THESE TRIUMPHANT WORDS, LEX LUTHOR RISES AND SOMBERLY SURVEYS THE [illegible] COURTROOM...
I TRUST YOU GRASP THE MONUMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE EVENTS!
I LEAVE NOW FOR METROPOLIS, TO PERFORM THE FINAL OPERATION- JOINING MY INCOMPARABLE BRAIN TO THE PHYSICAL SUPREMACY OF SUPERMAN'S BODY--
--TO REINCARNATE A SUPER-HUMAN LEX LUTHOR - RULER OF THE WORLD!
UNBROKEN SILENCE... THEN, A DRY, RASPING VOICE--
SO THE BATMAN'S DEATH--ACCOMPLISHED FIRST BY ERASING HIS MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS--THEN BY KILLING HIS BODY--
--WAS ONLY AN INCIDENTAL SIDE-ISSUE OF YOUR VICTORY OVER SUPERMAN?
A WASTE PRODUCT!
I CAME HERE NOT TO CLAIM CREDIT FOR THE DEED BUT TO USE THIS DISTINGUISHED ASSEMBLAGE AS A FORUM FOR MY PRONOUNCEMENT! THAT DONE, I BID YOU-
HOLD IT! THIS TRIAL IS NOT OVER--NOT QUITE!
WHY NOT? I'VE TOLD YOU THE WHOLE STORY! ARE YOU CALLING ME A LIAR?
THERE'S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LYING AND NOT KNOWING THE TRUTH. SO IF YOU'LL STEP DOWN I'LL CALL ANOTHER WITNESS--
SPARKY GRIMES--TAKE THE STAND!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
DON'T ASK ME, LUTHOR! ALL I KNOW IS I GOT A SUMMONS TO APPEAR IN THIS COURT!
NO WAY - I WOULDN'T SHOW!

SPARKY, AS LUTHOR'S CHIEF AIDE, YOU WERE AT HIS CONTROL CENTER A WEEK AGO TONIGHT...WHEN SOMETHING VERY UNUSUAL HAPPENED, RIGHT?
R-R-RIGHT...
TELL US ABOUT IT!
"WELL, I WAS SAM HOXIE...ONE OF OUR CONSOLE ENGINEERS...ACTING REAL PECULIAR--"
SPARKY, I'M LOSING MY MEMORY ...OR SOMETHING! I CAN'T REMEMBER CERTAIN THINGS ABOUT..ABOUT..THIS COMING CAPER!
--LIKE WHAT? NOBODY BUT LUTHOR KNOWS ALL THE TECHNICAL DETAILS!
"BUT THAT WASN'T WHAT SAM MEANT! HE WAS ASKING ABOUT THINGS HE WAS SUPPOSED TO KNOW--LIKE WHAT THE SATELLITE WAS FOR...WHERE THE MAGER RAYS WOULD GO...AND WHAT THE CAPER WAS BASICALLY ABOUT..."
"IT WENT ON LIKE THAT UNTIL I WAS JUST REPEATING MYSELF, AND I TOLD HIM TO GO LIE DOWN AND REST. FIVE MINUTES LATER, I WENT TO HAVE A LOOK AT HIM--"
AND I FOUND HIM IN A FAINT--UNCONSCIOUS!"
"I BROUGHT HIM TO--AND THIS WAS THE WEIRDEST PART..."
SOMEBODY SLUGGED ME...PUT ME IN THERE...I'VE BEEN OUT MORE THAN AN HOUR!
BUT I WAS TALKING TO YOU TEN MINUTES AGO!
NO NO NOT ME!
SPARKY, I'M GOING TO CLEAR UP THAT MYSTERY FOR YOU! SAM HOXIE HAD BEEN SLUGGED--AND HE WASN'T IN THE CONTROL CENTER WITH YOU!
THE "SAM" YOU SPOKE TO WAS...THE BATMAN --IN DISGUISE!
12

THE BATMAN WAS THERE TO GET THE INFORMATION YOU GAVE HIM--
--ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN WHERE--IF NOT HOW--
--TO BE ABLE TO THWART LUTHOR'S STRATEGY!
I OBJECT! WHY IS ANYONE LISTENING TO THIS GARBAGE? NOT ONLY IS THERE NO SHRED OF PROOF FOR ANY OF THIS--
--BUT HOW COULD THE BATMAN KNOW ENOUGH EVEN TO WANT TO INFILTRATE MY ORGANIZATION?
AND HOW COULD TWO-FACE POSSIBLY KNOW ABOUT IT--UNLESS THE BATMAN HIMSELF HAD TOLD HIM--WHICH IS EVEN MORE INCONCEIVABLE!
SIT DOWN, YOUR MAJESTY! I'LL SATISFY ALL YOUR OBJECTIONS BEFORE I'M THROUGH!
SPARKY, YOU'RE DISMISSED!
"HE DID THAT TO GET AWAY LONG ENOUGH TO CHANGE PLACES WITH SUPERMAN--DISGUISED AS THE BATMAN!"
HERE THEY COME AFTER ME! IT'S YOUR BALLGAME NOW, SUPERMAN!
I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, BATMAN!
STOP IT! STOP IT, I SAY!
TWO-FACE, YOU CONTEMPTIBLE FOOL, DO YOU THINK YOUR FANTASIES CAN ACTUALLY DISPROVE FACTS THAT WILL SOON BE APPARENT TO THE WORLD?
LUTHOR, THAT BALD EGG-HEAD OF YOURS HAS HATCHED MANY A HAIRY SCHEME--BUT THE ONE YOU'VE RECOUNTED HERE IS A HAREBRAINED DELUSION -- AS I SHALL PROVE WITH MY NEXT WITNESS!
I NOW CALL TO THE STAND--
13

SUPERMAN!
DON'T PANIC! SUPERMAN IS HERE AS A WITNESS!
THERE'S AMNESTY FOR EVERYONE PRESENT!
KROOOM
AND WHEN THE COURT CALMS DOWN
I HAVE A FEW QUESTIONS TO PUT TO YOU, SUPERMAN -
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. . I'VE BEEN LISTENING IN ON THE TRIAL! I'LL TAKE IT FROM WHERE YOU LEFT OFF!
LUTHOR, HOW COULD YOU HOPE TO SUCCEED WHEN YOU BEGAN WITH A FATAL BLUNDER-- THAT MILL-ON-DOLLAR OFFER?
I COULDN'T HELP WONDERING WHY ANYONE WOULD PUT UP A MILLION FOR SOMETHING I'D GLADLY DO FREE-- JUST FOR THE ASKING!
"I INVESTIGATED... AND FOUND THAT IN ADDITION TO THE DONOR'S ANONYMITY, THE OUTFIT THROUGH WHOM THE MONEY WAS PAID WAS ALSO BEING KEPT SECRET--SO I DECIDED TO TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE CHECK "
Superman
"SLEDGE AND WILLOCK--LUTHOR'S FAVORITE LEGAL EAGLES!"
14

"THE MORE I PUZZLED OVER IT, THE MORE I DECIDED IT WAS A TOB FOR THE BATMAN! WE RENDEZVOUSED AT HIS HEAD- QUARTERS IN GOTHAM CITY"
I'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT'S BEHIND ALL THIS... WHAT LUTHOR'S UP TO! THINK YOU CAN FIND OUT--?
THAT'S MY SPECIALTY!
SO NOW YOU KNOW, LUTHOR, WHO PUT THE BATMAN ON YOUR TAIL!
AFTER HE PENETRATED YOUR H.Q., HE BROUGHT BACK ENOUGH DATA ON SKYSURGEON TO FRUSTRATE YOUR WHOLE GHOULISH OPERATION!
"YOUR MASER RAY IS EASILY COUNTERED - PROVIDED ONE KNOWS IT IS THERE..."
"I SET UP A MICROWAVE FREQUENCY-SCRAMBLER TO SCREEN ME ALL THE TIME I WAS ON STAGE!"
I'M NOT THE ACTOR BATMAN IS, BUT I GAVE A CONVINCING PERFORMANCE AFTER THE FLARE WENT OFF!
OBVIOUSLY, SINCE SKYSURGEON DIDN'T WORK FOR ME--NEITHER DID IT WORK ON THE BATMAN AT THE MUSEUM.
"THEN--AFTER HE AND I CHANGED PLACES-- AND YOU THOUGHT YOU'D CAPTURED ME IN THE BATMAN'S BODY-- DISORIENTED AND HELPLESS."
WOK
"--WHAT YOU GOT WAS REALLY ME-- IN MY BODY!"
"INSTEAD OF A PUNCHING BAG FOR YOUR MURDEROUS FURY--"
WOK WOK
"YOU GOT A WORKOUT THAT EXHAUSTED YOU. JUST BE GLAD I ROLLED WITH YOUR PUNCHES -TO KEEP YOU FROM BREAKING YOUR HANDS..."
15

SO I LET YOU "KILL" ME...AND WHEN YOU SENT ME UP IN THAT COFFIN TO JOIN SKYSURGEON IN ORBIT--YOU SOLVED OUR REMAINING PROBLEM--
"--THE LOCATION OF YOUR RADAR-SHIELDED SATELLITE, WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE CONTINUE TO POSE A CONSTANT THREAT AS LONG AS IT WAS UP THERE!..."
"I EASILY TOOK CARE OF THAT!"
K-RROOOOOM
AS FOR THE BATMAN, THE LAST I SAW OF HIM WAS WHEN WE SWITCHED ROLES--AND WHILE I CAN'T ANSWER FOR WHAT MAY LATER HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM, IT'S NOW ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT LUTHOR DID NOT KILL THE BATMAN!
I PROMISED IMMUNITY FOR EVERYONE PRESENT IN THIS COURTROOM--BUT FOR LUTHOR, THAT ENDS THE MOMENT HE LEAVES HERE--
--AND I'LL BE WAITING!
16

CONCLUDED ON 3rd PAGE FOLLOWING

ONE MOMENT LATER...
MEMBERS OF THE JURY--HOW SAY YOU?
NOT GUILTY!
ALL RIGHT, I'VE LOST! BUT WHERE IS THE HONOR OF THIS COURT WHEN ITS GLORY-HUNGRY, UNPRINCIPLED PROSECUTOR CAN BE IN COLLUSION WITH THE ENEMY?
IT'S OBVIOUS THE WELL-NAMED TWO-FACE HAD MORE INFORMATION THAN I DID--BUT HOW DID HE GET IT?
HOW COULD HE ESTABLISH SUCH QUICK AND INTIMATE CONTACT WITH SUPERMAN? WHAT BETRAYALS AND SELLOUTS WERE INVOLVED?
AND YOU ALL HAVE THE GALL TO CALL YOURSELVES CRIMINALS! I'D RATHER FACE SUPERMAN THAN SPEND ANOTHER MINUTE AMONG YOU!
AND AFTER LEX LUTHOR MAKES HIS RAGING EXIT...
MR. DENT, WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY TO THOSE CHARGES?
YOUR HONOR, I CANNOT DISCLOSE MY METHODS WITHOUT MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR THESE TRIALS TO CONTINUE!
BUT I GIVE YOU MY WORD EVERYTHING WILL BE PERFECTLY CLEAR AT A LATER DATE--AND THAT I HAVE DONE NOTHING TO COMPROMISE MY INTEGRITY!
THE COURT EXPRESSES ITS COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN THE PROSECUTOR--AND LOOKS FORWARD TO THE NEXT SESSION!
SO DO I! HAHAHAHAHA!
AND WITH THAT MANIACAL LAUGH RINGING IN OUR EARS, COURT IS ADJOURNED TILL NEXT ISSUE'S "THE TESTIMONY OF THE JOKER" -- IN BATMAN #294, ON SALE 2ND WEEK IN SEPTEMBER!

Before jumping into this issue's letters, let us point out our new title and logo design, both of which were submitted by David Karoll of Kerhonkson, N.Y. David's design caught the fancy of Bat-editor Julie Schwartz and as a thank you for it, we're sending him an original *BATMAN* script! And now, on to the BAT SIGNALS . . .

Dear Editor: * * * * *

BATMAN #289 was pretty darn good! I mean, look at all it had going for it. First, we were graced with the fantastic artistry of Mike Grell, whose work on this title surpasses that of most artists of the recent past. Mike manages to portray power, grace and skill—making the artwork a real joy!

And the story! David V. Reed has finally begun to diversify, moving away from straight detective stories. Not only did "Sign of the Skull" introduce a bizarre new villain, it could actually be classified as a horror story. A modern-day vampire, driven by much more than bloodlust, motivated by a lack of one of the most essential human qualities. Without joy, is life worth living? The concept offers opportunities for pretty heavy speculation. The story was thought-provoking, but quite enjoyable for just that reason.

Not only was Skull an interesting character, but Reed approached the story in an excellent way. The opening narration by Cosmo Dugger was possibly the best way to begin this story, because it held the best potential for delving into the concept of **Anhedonia**. I was sorry, for this reason, to see that the narration wasn't used more. But then again, Reed was being realistic is realizing that story narration by a character who was trying to be secretive would limit the scope somewhat. We would have lost a lot of the scenes with **The Batman** himself. The Caped Crusader, after all, is where the real joy of the book lies!

All in all, the issue was great. One of the best **BATMAN** issues in a long time! The artwork, Skull Dugger, the story tone and approach! What action! What SUSPENSE! WHAT JOY!! Aaaaaahhhhhh . . .

The late M. CHRISTIANSEN
704 S. Third St.
Rockford, IL 61108

(Alas, poor "M."—didn't even get to see the conclusion of the Skull Dugger case in BATMAN #290!—BR)

Dear Julie and Bob, * * * * *

Coming on the heels of the **Penguin** epic, **BATMAN #289** was a disappointment. This was the most predictable David Reed story yet—no surprises, no winding sub-plots, no mystery! The total revelation of the antagonist's motives and plans can only lead to a pedestrian "**Batman** chases the bad guy" story . . . and it did! What really irked me, though, was when **Batman** tried on Dugger's recogito device on page 12—this is ridiculous! **The Batman** is no dummy, Dave! There's no way he would've blindly tried on a device that, for all he knew, could've been a killing machine!

Actually, though, the concept of a joy-vampire is fairly interesting—but it just wasn't developed properly. Better luck next issue, David.

Even the art was a downer. Get rid of the facial detail. I don't like Neal Adams art as it is, but Grell-aping-Adams is even worse!

I must give Grell his due credit, though. The cover was superb, as was that last panel on page 6—what a dynamic scene! The ensuing skirmish on page 7 was just as exciting.

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New Orleans, LA 70114

(You can't fool us, Gerald—you really loved the issue, but you were afraid Cosmo Dugger would come after you, the way he zapped joyous M. Christiansen above! —BR) * * * * *

After the *Dr. Tzin-Tzin* adventure a few issues back, we asked you readers to supply the reason *T-T* had for stealing Gotham Stadium.

MATT L. HOLMES of St. Thomas, Ontario suggested that the villain intended to form his own baseball team, the *Tzin-Tzin Tzingers*! And STUART SNYDER of Bellmawr, N.J. decided the bad doctor would put the stadium in his back yard—and charge admission to the games!

ANDY COHEN of Richmond, Va. says *Dr. Tzin-Tzin* would put an ad saying: For Sale, One Used Stadium, Cheap! in our competitors' magazines because "anybody who reads them instead of *DCs* is crazy enough to buy a stadium!"

ADAM CASTRO of New Rochelle, N.Y. said *Tzin-Tzin* needed the stadium to properly display the Sphinx, which he stole earlier!

***Dr. Tzin-Tzin* could 1) sell it for scrap, 2) put it into orbit near the *JLA* satellite and give free tickets to all the *Justice Leaguers* except *Batman*, for spite, 3) build a huge fireplace and keep it on his mantelpiece, 4) sell it to the *Sportsmaster*, or 5) move it to the moon and hold the Dust Bowl there! Seems like *T-T* could take some advice from ROBERT A. BUETHE of Elmont, N.Y., who came up with that batch of alternatives!**

But the strangest reason of all came from PAUL ORTEGA of Bryan, Texas: *Tzin-Tzin* would have broken through the dimensional barrier to Earth-Prime and kidnapped Bob Rozakis, Paul Levitz, and E. Nelson Bridwell! Then, he would dress them in costumes of *The Atom, Elongated Man* and *Woozy Winks*! Then, he would place that trio in a life-and-death struggle against three who have come under his control: Alvin, Simon and Theodore—thus forcing the battle between the Woodchucks and the Chipmunks!

Thanks for your "entries", readers—and we look forward to running another "contest" like this in the future! * * * * *

Just enough space to answer a query from SCOTT GIBSON of Evergreen, Colo.! Yes, we do have some very special plans for *BATMAN #300*, scheduled to appear in March of 1978 (which is a long way off as we write this in May, 1977)! David V. Reed has already written this awesome script and it's about what will happen when . . . OOPS! Can't let the BAT out of the bag yet . . . maybe next issue! **—BOB ROZAKIS**

DC Publishorial

THE GREATEST SUPERMAN STORY EVER TOLD

"It was one of those few Superman ideas that had never been done before," explained Cary Bates as he enthusiastically discussed the new, ground-breaking Superman Dollar Comic on sale this month. "It was even more exciting because I had a full 83 pages to develop it. There was room to create little climaxes within bigger ones, to throw in flash-backs and flash-forwards and an occasional surprise, to explore themes that in other stories I could only touch on. I constructed it just as I would a full-length movie script. In every way it was the most rewarding Superman comic I've ever done."

For the past ten years, Cary has been one of the Man of Steel's steadiest and most inventive biographers. But, as Cary mentions, the Superman Dollar Comic is a radical departure both in form and in content from anything he's done in the past. In fact, even within Cary's lifetime (25 years), there's been nothing like it—a novel-length saga featuring only one central character.

And the idea? Credit is given to a friend of writer Marty Pasko, John LaMartine.

Marty thought the idea was terrific and shared it with Cary because both authors had agreed to collaborate on the Superman Dollar Comic. They got the backing of Superman editor Julie Schwartz, brainstormed about the total concept, and divided up the chapters. Cary got I and II.

"I guess I'm very hard to collaborate with," says Cary in an effort to explain how he also ended up with chapters III and IV. "I don't like to know all the details in advance. I'd rather plant a lot of things along the way and see for myself how they turn out.

"When Marty read my chapters, they weren't quite what he'd envisioned. Then I gave him a list of all the things I'd stuck in the first half of the book that he'd have to resolve in the second. We spent the rest of the afternoon in Julie's office."

The outcome, of course, was that Cary would write the whole book.

"Actually," admits Cary, "I was kind of excited it turned out this way. Since I had a vision of how I thought the book should be, I was glad to be able to see it all the way through."

Understandable. The plot has all the elements that have made Cary's Superman tales so eminently readable for so many years. There's the critical counter-point between the Man of Steel and Clark Kent, the humorous interplay of the Galaxy Communications staff, a raft of extraordinary super-feats, inspired cunning from both Luthor and Brainiac, and a bruising climactic battle ending in death.

But most of all, the comic really does revolve around one of the few Superman ideas that has never been done before. And even more than the twists and turns of plot, more than the dynamic clashes, and more than the exciting Curt Swan/Vince Colletta visuals that only a story of this length allows, shines the concept in all its originality.

Let us know how **you** liked the book.

With all the best—

Jenette

"Thanks for Calling"...

By this time, the DC Direct Currents Hotline is expected to have received nearly 750,000 calls. Recently, we've been receiving around 100,000 calls a month—nearly twice as many as we anticipated!

We're grateful for this fantastic response. We really are.

Unfortunately, the Direct Currents Hotline is no more.

Our reasons for this act are simple: the project has been too successful. We have been receiving more calls than our present number of lines could possibly handle. At times, the volume of busy signals has been so great the telephone company has asked us to consider dropping the service. During the two hours immediately following the end of the school day, for example, circuits have often been jammed all across the United States.

There is one last chance for the Hotline. Even as these words are being set in print, the producers of the upcoming Superman movie are considering picking up the service to keep you informed as to the film's progress. Watch this space next month (and keep your eye on the Daily Planet pages); if they decide to do so, you'll be the first to hear about it.

However, DC Comics isn't through with the **IDEA** behind the Hotline. Elsewhere, you can read about the DC Direct Currents Newsletter, a monthly bulletin bringing you the various movies and television series being produced . . . you get the idea. As much as we hate to see the Hotline go, we're truly excited about the Newsletter. We're sure you will be, too.

And to all you folks who wore down your fingertips dialing the Hotline—our deepest thanks and appreciation. It's great to know you're out there.